

GREENWICH FREE LIBRARY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

DECEMBER 2024 MEETING MINUTES

Regular Monthly Meeting

Wednesday, December 18, 2024

7:00 pm

Community Room

Attendees: Patrice Abate, Mary Ann Spiezio, Ellen Fronhofer, Christine Richards, Teri Pendergrass, Sarah Murphy (Library Director), Tony Jordan, Paul Thurston, Cliff Oliver, Sandy McReynolds (Library Employee), KC Scott (Library Employee), Marge Maxwell (Library Employee)

1. Call to order 7:08 pm
2. Board Action Items
 - a. Approval of proposed November 2024 Minutes (separate document)
Ellen made a motion to approve the November meeting minutes. Teri seconds. Board approved.
3. Board Committee Reports
 - a. Facilities Committee (Aaron, Paul, Teri) – RFP for the work on the community room will go out on 1/6/24. We should have a lawyer look at the construction contract before we begin the work and should we have a project manager (Clerk of the Works). There are some local candidates. We all agreed that we should hire a Clerk of the Works. Tony offered to review the RFP as well as the construction contracts because he could at least let us know if we need additional review. The camera has been installed in the Gill Room.
 - b. Finance & Fundraising Committee (Mary Ann, Patrice, Paul) – To be discussed in Director’s Report
 - c. Material Review Committee (Cliff, Patrice, Paul) – No report
 - d. Policy & Audit Committee (Mary Ann, Patrice, Paul) – We discussed the suggestion that we do Active Shooter and Emergency Evacuation training for the staff.
 - e. Board Recruitment (Cliff, Patrice) – Patrice shared with the Board that she had spoken to Kathy Nichols-Tomkins about joining the Board of Trustees and asked Kathy to think about it.
 - f. Personnel & HR Committee (Mary Ann, Paul) – To be discussed during executive session.

4. Gill Room Report (presented by Sandy McReynolds, Historian) – Sandy purchased a new full size laptop with her budget. She plans to be fastened to the table so it can't be taken. Cliff and Patrice have both volunteered to work in the Gill Room and they will be trained after the Christmas break.
5. Treasurer's Report – **Paul made a motion to approve the transaction reports from November. Cliff seconds. Board approved.** The budget for 2025 was reviewed with the Board. **Ellen made a motion to approve the 2025 budget, Paul seconded. Board approved.** When we receive the matching donation from our anonymous donor this month the check will be deposited into the GFN Operating Account before year end so that the donation is recognized in our 2024 operating budget.
6. Friends of the Greenwich Free Library Update – Calendar sales have been brisk. They are doing their book sale this Saturday and on January 2nd.
7. Library Director's Report –

	Visitors to the library	Community space use	Community attendees	Library programs	Library program and event attendees	Early Childhood programs (Targeting 0-5)	Early Childhood program attendees	Volunteer hours	Farm 2 Library participants	Pounds of waste diverted
Nov 2023	3731	77	573	18	307	11	195	132	249	616.2
Nov 2024	3611	63	360	26	363	15	442	115	276	999.2

	Check outs	Borrowers	Holds satisfied	New cards issued	Computer sessions	WiFi uses	Cossayuna WiFi	Overdrive checkouts	Kanopy plays
Nov 2023	2219	405	521	12	136	647	68	372	75
Nov 2024	2065	393	342	20	127	745		468	123

STRATEGIC PLANNING GOALS:

Public Promotion

A1 Communications A2 Expand patron base

A3 Outreach & Reduce Barriers to Access

- Emilly and Kris collaborated with the Youth Center on Sundaes with Santa, and had a great turnout at the GYC space.

Programming

B1 Programs that fulfill patron needs

- Current and upcoming programs and events can be found [on our website calendar](#).
- We ran a 4-week crochet club during our weekly Lego Takeover, and we found this was a great way to provide additional programming for 6-11 year-olds during a time when they are already at the library. We plan to offer more of these creative workshops that push into our already existing programs.
- Kris and Emilly report on their goings on [here](#).

B2 Give local artists, writers, creators, and experts a platform:

- The GALA artists will present the second annual “New Beginnings” group show throughout the month of January, with a public reception on Sunday January 12.

Partnerships

C1. C2 Local not-for-profits and businesses

- Thanks to a connection made by Naomi Meyer, we are hosting a MoonCatcher “MoonBee” January 11.. This is a 2-hr event in which participants help to create reusable sustainable period pads to be sent to those in need around the world.
- Our partnership with LEAP’s Youth Employment Program has allowed our summer employee, Deshae Harris, to return for an after-school and weekend job. It’s a terrific program.

Place

- See Facilities report
- Available staff received AED training this morning, and Christy Hopkins from the fire department will return to meet with those who could not attend, and any volunteers who wish to learn
- The camera is set up in the Gill Room, and Sandy and I are monitoring it

Preservation

- See Gill Room report

OTHER

Fundraising and financial

Annual Appeal is currently \$24,338, which includes \$3,413.52 from our December 8th fundraiser. I have reached out to an interested donor to get us to \$25,000 and will request our matching funds right away.

ThirdWay Space gave us a restricted gift of \$2500 to go towards furniture recommendations from the space audit.

Last week, we received notice of probate regarding the will of longtime patron Arlene Siegel, who passed away in October. Her will stipulates a bequest to Greenwich Free Library in the amount of \$25,000. We have been notified that it takes a minimum of seven months to fully settle an estate. It was suggested that when this donation is received it should be deposited to the GFN Endowment Account.

8. Period for Public Expression – Comments were received from the staff regarding the space audit. They felt that it was not very realistic in terms of the comparisons. There is also concern about getting rid of materials and DVDs that the patrons are using to create more space. KC specifically stated that she does not feel that we should move all the nonfiction books to the basement. Ellen spoke to the purpose of having the evaluation and stated that it doesn’t mean we are going to make the suggested changes. She stated that no decisions had been made and that there hasn’t even been any discussion at the Board level. Sarah commented that an outside opinion was sought and that she would like to do whatever we can to increase circulation. There was a suggestion for regular staff meetings to keep everyone in the loop and allow them all to work together on issues and brainstorm solutions.

9. Old Business – None

10. New Business – Hannie Varosy got in touch with Sarah and she wants to donate one of her husband’s sculptures to the Library. Cliff will work with Sarah to select an appropriate piece.

11. Dates of Future Board Meeting Calendar –January meeting will be held on January 15th at 7 pm. Annual meeting scheduled for February 19, 2025 at 6 pm.

12. Adjournment – Paul made motion to adjourn. Tony seconds. Meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Digitally signed by Mary Ann Spiezio